

Setting the Direction for Montana's Next Generation

Recommendations for Billings City Council

Big Sky Worldview Forum

[Turning Billings Blue](#) – is the goal of the Progressives

(See our website to learn about this effort at bigskyworldview.org/library)

What happens in Billings, doesn't stay in Billings, pass this on to a Billings voter

Dick Pence rapence45@gmail.com

City Councils are our most formative and important governmental bodies. Across America (and Montana) they trend toward being the breeding grounds for Progressive ideas and agenda's – especially where social issues are concerned. This is where the sexual revolution and all of its step-children have been reared. Marxism (so-called Socialism), Radical Feminism, LGBT activism, environmentalism, and the entitlement mentalities have generally thrived at the City Council level. [Billings has been targeted to lead Montana BLUE.](#)

Because these groups generally oppose the Christian worldview, we feel it important to do our best to recommend candidates who would lean toward conservative values. We consult with others we trust, but we are responsible for our suggestions. This election is - in theory - non-partisan, but only the uninformed believe that to be true in practice.

A couple of the current city councilpersons and several of the candidates are associated with or members of the [Democratic Socialist of America](#) (see note on Antonio Gramsci) ([DSA](#)). This is a hard core Marxist group. Google [Justice Democrats](#), you will see that this group is everywhere and growing [in Montana](#).

We are also skeptical of those who lean heavily towards the agendas of the Billings Chamber of Commerce because this group has promoted bigger government and social issues we oppose.

Why is it most Progressives try and sound like conservatives? Because they can't get elected promoting Progressive views. You have to listen for "buzz words" like *a community that embraces diversity, unity and acceptance*. Generally, this is code for support for special rights for some.

For your convenience, we are putting our recommended candidates in each ward first in each ward. Your ballot will guide you to the Ward you are in. Our comments are limited to what we could discover that was unique. Our **color codes** are like a **STOP** LIGHT.

Candidates and Comments:

Ward 1

John Armstrong – the consensus recommendation, John is a conservative who will look to limiting government and sound budgeting. He owns his own business and has been involved in city issues. He is an Army veteran, a member of the Billings Heights Exchange Club, a North Park Task Force officer, and currently serves as a commissioner on the mayor's traffic committee. He has a reputation of working with others in a non-partisan manner. All of our sources recommend him.

Kendra Shaw – “*we need to be more like Missoula*” - clearly a Progressive, she will likely push for higher taxes and larger government. She is for One Big Sky and stands for inclusivity and diversity – code for a Non-Discrimination Ordinance (NDO). **A telling message from her Facebook:**

*“Who we elect sends a powerful message of who is welcome in our community and whose voices are valued. *That* is our city's reputation. It's the story people in Bozeman and Missoula tell of us. We can keep doing what we've been doing, but it won't make these problems go away, and it definitely won't attract the next generation of Montanans.”*

She has all the markings of a DSA sympathizer.

Jim Ronquillo – a former City Councilman, Jim ran as a Democrat for County Commissioner and lost. He currently serves on the Parks and Cemetery Board for the city. A retired MDU employee, he is a strong advocate for the South Side. Interestingly, he thinks it was a bad thing when they lost all the bars on the South Side. Those I trust questioned his consistency and suggested he favors welfare approaches to problem solving. Listening to his [interview with the Gazette](#), he seemed to lack focus and specifics.

Ward 2

Roy Neese – Roy is the incumbent, a solid conservative and the consensus recommendation. He is concerned that the council not be taken over by those who wish to re-code Billings. He would oppose an NDO. He's been a member of the Heights Community Development Task Force since 2009. He and his wife Gayla have lived in the Heights for 26 years. Neese works as a business consultant for First Data. He has volunteered at a church camp for years, his faith is very important to him. He supports Ducks Unlimited and works with non-profits.

Roger Gravgaard – Roger is the one hard choice here. He is a business man and former teacher. Generally conservative, he lacks the consensus and the position as the incumbent that Roy has. Some have questioned his position on certain Chamber issues.

Randy Heinz – has lived in the heights since 1973, is a Veteran, and a History graduate of MSU. He has interacted with the homeless and working poor a lot. He is [DSA member or supporter](#) on his [Twitter page](#). Like many of the liberals, it is hard to find information on him other than the run of the mill stuff.

Michael Richardson – is the head coach for the Billings Bulls professional hockey team. He has lived in Billings a relatively short time. The question of how a coach has the time to be a councilman and be at the meetings every week would seem to be important. Notably, a comment he made to the Gazette was *“What role should city government play in promoting economic development? A lot, especially if we want to retain a work force that is up and coming.”* This suggests a guy who looks to government, not business to develop Billings. Hard to find information on Michael.

Ward 3

Note- there is no primary in this ward. Both candidates will move forward but there is a **stark difference** between them.

Aldo Rowe – This business man has long been known as a supporter of conservative values. A Veteran, he has a desire to bring his experience on boards he has served on to the budgeting process in Billings. These boards include the Community Development Board with the City of Billings, the Girl Scout Board, and The Boys and Girls Club Board. A clear and consensus choice, he will listen well, and vote for common sense governing. The clear choice for Ward 3.

Danny Choriki – Danny works with information technologies with a special interest in how people adapt to rapid change. He is arguably the most liberal candidate in the race. There have been question about his actual residence. He is a “card carrying member” of the ACLU and became a Humanist in high school where he is [still involved](#). Among others organizations, he has been involved with the LEFT Green Party, the Democratic Party, the International or [Industrial Workers of the World](#) and the Ethical Cultural Society. He ran unsuccessfully for the House in 2018. Danny has stated to friends that he lives with Denise Joy who is a radical Socialist and a proud member of the Democratic Socialists of America. She is one of two new councilpersons who have been divisive on the council. Common sense alone would tell you where Danny will land, but so do his positions. Danny is a [DSA member](#) (scroll down a bit).

Ward 4

Pam Purinton - Pam has a long, consistent track record as a conservative and is pro-business. She has been a leader of conservative organizations and is a woman with a strong faith background. She will sturdily question issues like *One Big Sky* and insist that they not add to the burden of the tax payer. She is the clear and consensus choice for Ward 4. She would not see and NDO as favorable the City Council should be involved in.

Gordon Olson – Gordon is generally a conservative, but has not demonstrated consistency as a conservative. He has not been widely accepted as a guy with consistent, good thinking. Finding information on him is difficult.

Daron Olson – is a Millennial who has many of their weakness without their good traits. He is the **most dangerous** person in the race.

He is the Rimrock Mall marketing director. He worked in radio and later in real-estate before his current position. He is openly a person of faith but was a YES in the Gazette on the Non Discrimination Ordinance (NDO). This demonstrates either an ignorance of the issue are a liberal bent. (See more below)

Daron is a member of NextGEN, the Billings Chamber’s young professional’s group for emerging community leaders. Meant to establish a place for Millennial’s looking to further their professional career, [NextGEN](#) is open to individuals age 21-39. Because the Chamber has been progressive, this raises questions. Like the Chamber, he favors a Local Option Sales tax.

MORE: *“If we plan for mediocrity, we will get mediocrity. And I don’t want that for Billings. We take Billings to the next level by creating an environment in Billings that is welcoming and inclusive, so new industry, businesses, and families locate here. **Passing an NDO in Billings will bode well for economic development and workforce development.** Billings is filled with the friendliest folks around but regardless of that reality, perception is reality for people looking to locate here. . [“If Billings](#) is perceived as not welcoming because we do not have an NDO, and our peer cities do, we miss out on the opportunity to welcome that business or family to our beautiful valley. Furthermore, One Big Sky District, is the direction we need to be moving.”... “Research shows Millennials and Gen Z make “quality of life” or the livability factor, a top priority when making the decision on where to put roots. If we wish to attract and retain quality talent to fill the workforce needs of the future, we must make Billing’s parks and trails an integral part of the overall workforce development equation.” [Authors note – how many of you considered this kind of thing before moving to your next job?]*

Nicole Gallagher – is a debt settlement attorney and public defender. She is probably the **biggest threat** to conservatives because she appears to be a “stealth Progressive.” *“Help me work towards **a safer and more inclusive** City by voting for me...”* She did not answer the Gazette question about an NDO but the aforementioned is code for an NDO. Very hard to find information on this attorney, she apparently scrubbed her social media but we have some BEFORE pictures. She is very liberal – this is also supported by the fact that Penny Ronning is backing her. Again, Penny is on the Council and can fairly be classified as a radical Progressive and a DSA sympathizer.

Before Nicole scrubbed her Facebook for this election, she was clearly pro-abortion. We will attempt to **attach pictures** from her social media that you might find interesting.

Carmelita Dominguez – “Working together for progress... welcomes a diverse community” (on her door hanger). You have to listen for “buzz words” like “a community that embraces diversity, unity and acceptance.” Who doesn’t? This suggests a strong, but hidden Progressive agenda. Her husband Thomas Scarborough is a doctor.

Yes, a picture is worth a thousand words as you see on this [Gazette photo](#) with the caption “Carmelita Dominguez, right, and her children Josie Scarborough, 2,

left, and Quinn Scarborough, 6, middle, cheer for speakers during the "Billings is Ready" NDO supporters rally on the steps of First Congregational Church on Monday. (08/18/2014)

She is a probable DSA sympathizer.

Ward 5

Mike Boyett – is the consistent, consensus conservative candidate. No exceptions in the people we asked. He was an Air Force officer, served in the Sheriff's department, worked in the banking industry, and was a security officer. Has been on the zoning commission, the crime prevention council and served on other public service interest. He brings experience, he is fiscally responsible and more interested in ensuring your tax dollars are spent efficiently than looking for new funding revenues. He is also socially conservative.

Frederick Wilburn – is a small business owner. He is a Democrat and union representative. He is for west end water development, keeping parks and trails up etc. Hard to find specifics on him. Known as a hip-hop promoter.

Dennis Ulvestad – Dennis has run for council a number of times. Several years ago, he was progressive then changed. We are not able to determine where he stands today. Perhaps more important, those who care about him tell us he is not physically strong enough to do this job – he honestly has serious health issues.

Jennifer Merecki – is a [proud member](#) (scroll down) of the [Billings Democratic Socialists](#) of America. She has been pictured with Bernie Sanders as his lead for Billings under this label. She is a long-time leader and [Progressive Democratic](#) activist who lacks integrity as you see below. She favors gun control, wealth redistribution, and universal health care. She is about as far LEFT as you can get, supported by Penny Ronning. NOTE, she ran for the legislature in the Heights last November and lost. She then either moved to her mother's house in Ward 5 to run for this city council election...or some have suggested she is merely using her mother's address in order to be able to run in Ward 5 but perhaps still lives in Ward 2. She put her name into consideration as a replacement in Ward 2 when a city council seat became vacant in December of 2018 when Brewster stepped down and [Roy Neese was appointed](#)